

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-10 IO-13
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0406
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
AMCONSUL SAO PAULO
SECDEF WASHDC
JCS WASHDC
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ

UNCLAS BRASILIA 1774

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MASS SHUM BR PFOR
SUBJECT: PRESS AND POLITICAL REACTION TO BRAZILIAN REJECTION OF
SECURITY ASSISTANCE

REF: A. BRASILIA 1737 B. BRASILIA 1739 C. BRASILIA 1740

1. SUMMARY. PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESMAN CARMARGO HAS INDICATED THAT
GOB HAS NO FURTHER DESIRE TO CONTINUE EXCHANGE OVER REJECTION
OF SECURITY ASSISTANCE, OR TO WITHDRAW MILITARY MISSION FROM
WASHINGTON. ITAMARATY SPOKESMAN BRANDAO INDICATED THAT GOB WILL
NOT RECALL AMBASSADOR PINHEIRO FROM WASHINGTON. BRANDAO AS WELL
AS EMFA CHIEF, GENERAL POTIGUARA NOTED BRAZIL WOULD HAVE OTHER
SOURCES FOR MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND CREDITS. JORNAL DO BRASIL
EDITORIAL WHILE SUPPORTING GOB ON CLAIM OF INTERFERENCE
BY USG, CALLS UPON GOVERNMENT TO SUSTAIN ITS PROGRAM FOR
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IMPROVEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN BRAZIL. JORNAL ALSO REPEATED
MARCH 6 ESTADO STORY WHICH PURPORTED TO SUMMARIZE USG'S
HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT. ARENA LEADERS MACIEL AND MARCHEZAN
HAVE ANNOUNCED SUPPORT FOR PRESIDENT, BUT PARTY
SECRETARY GENERAL MARCHEZAN CAUTIONED AGAINST EMOTIONAL ANTI-
AMERICAN ATTITUDE. IN MDB, TWO SENATORS AND DEPUTY TOOK
ISSUE WITH MDB SECRETARY GENERAL THALES RAMALHO'S ANNOUNCEMENT

OF PROPOSED TO PERSONALLY EXPRESS SOLIDARITY WITH PRESIDENT ON ISSUE, WITH SENATOR PAULO BROSSARD EXPRESSING ACUTE INTEREST IN CONTENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT. IN WIDELY QUOTED COMMENTS, VISITING SENATOR CHARLES MATHIAS EXPRESSED BELIEF THAT LATEST EPISODE WOULD NOT AFFECT OTHER AREAS OF COOPERATIVE US/GOB RELATIONSHIP, AND POINTED OUT THAT US CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS LONG PREDATES CARTER'S ADMINISTRATION. END SUMMARY.

2. GOB HAS, FOR THE MOMENT, ATTEMPTED TO CLOSE THE DISPUTE OVER THE USG'S HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT ON BRAZIL WHICH LEAD TO THE LATTER'S REJECTION OF SECURITY ASSISTANCE (REFTELS). PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SECRETARY COL. CAMARGO TOLD THE PRESS MARCH 6 "THE NEXT MOVE OF THE CHESS GAME BELONGS TO THE PARTNER" AND DECLARED THAT THE GOB HAD "COMPLETED THE NECESSARY STEPS" WITH THE RELEASE MARCH 5 OF THE TERSE ITAMARATY NOTE RESPONDING TO THE US PRESS RELEASE. CAMARGO ALSO DENIED RUMORS SUPPOSEDLY CIRCULATING IN WASHINGTON THAT BRAZIL WOULD WITHDRAW ITS MILITARY MISSION FROM THE US. ITAMARATY'S SPOKESMAN BRANDAO AFFIRMED THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD NO PLANS AT THE MOMENT TO CALL BRAZILIAN AMBASSADOR PINHEIRO BACK FROM WASHINGTON FOR CONSULTATIONS.

3. REGARDING BRAZILIAN DEFENSE INTERESTS, BRANDAO NOTED GOB COULD OBTAIN FROM OTHER COUNTRIES CREDITS AND ASSISTANCE TO REPLACE AID IT HAD REJECTED FROM THE US. SIMILARLY EMFA CHIEF, GENERAL POTIGUARA, "GUARANTEED" THAT GOB REJECTION OF MILITARY AID WOULD NOT LEAD TO WAR MATERIAL PROBLEMS FOR THE BRAZILIAN ARMED FORCES. HE ADDED HIS SUPPORT FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S
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POSITION RE REJECTION OF CREDITS.

4. JORNAL DO BRASIL IN EDITORIAL QUALIFIES AS "ABSOLUTELY IRREFUTABLE" THE GOB POSITION IN REPELLING "ANY INTERFERENCE IN OUR INTERNAL AFFAIRS," BUT ADDS THAT THIS SHOULD NOT LEAD TO INSENSITIVITY TO HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS. AFFIRMING THAT DISRESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS WAS NEVER GOVERNMENT POLICY UNDER THE REVOLUTION, EDITORIAL POINTS OUT THAT ABUSES HAVE NONETHELESS OCCURRED, DUE TO COMPLEXITY OF STATE APPARATUS, ENLARGEMENT OF SECURITY FUNCTIONS, AND THE WEAKENING OF INSTITUTIONS. REFERRING TO GEISEL REGIME'S EFFORTS TO CURB ABUSES AND TO THE RECENT IMPROVEMENTS IN CENTRAL CONTROL OVER DEVIATIONS FROM GOVERNMENT POLICY IN THIS FIELD, EDITORIAL DECLARES THAT THE NATION HOPES PRESIDENT WILL SUSTAIN HIS POLICY OF IMPROVEMENT, PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS.

5. JORNAL DO BRASIL CARRIES STORY WHICH APPEARED MARCH 6 IN O ESTADO, PURPORTING TO SUMMARIZE CONTENTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT. IT INDICATES THAT HUMAN RIGHTS DOCUMENT WILL DEAL WITH

TORTURE, PARTICULARLY HERZOG CASE; CENSORSHIP AND SELF-CENSORSHIP IN THE MEDIA; SUNDRY ASPECTS OF ILLEGAL IMPRISONMENT AND VIOLATIONS OF DUE PROCESS; DEATH SQUAD ACTIVITIES (WITH STATEMENT OF POSSIBLE OFFICIAL TOLERANCE), CASSATIONS, PERSECUTION OF THE CHURCH, AND ILL TREATMENT OF INDIANS.

6. ARTICLES IN JORNAL DO BRASIL TODAY, AND IN JORNAL AND ESTADO YESTERDAY, CAPSULIZED HISTORY OF GROWING GOB/USG FRICTIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE, ESPECIALLY AS PLAYED OUT IN US CONGRESS, SINCE EARLY 1970'S. MOST PAPERS ALSO CARRIED AMBASSADOR CRIMMINS' EXPRESSION OF SURPRISE AT GOB REACTION TO REPORT IN VIEW OF ITAMARATY'S KNOWLEDGE MONTHS IN ADVANCE OF INEVITABILITY OF A REPORT.

7. POLITICAL REACTION HAS BEGUN TO FOCUS ON THE HUMAN RITHTS ISSUE. MDB SENATORS PAULO BROSSARD AND LEITE CHAVES AND MDB DEPUTY FREITAS NOBRE HAVE INDICATED THEIR DISAGREEMENT
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WITH MDB SECRETARY THALES RAMALHO'S PROPOSAL MARCH 5 TO PERSONALLY EXPRESS TO GEISEL MDB'S SOLIDARITY ON THE ISSUE; THE LEGISLATORS SEE IT AS EXCESSIVELY SLAVISH RESPONSE. BROSSARD FOCUSED ON THE CONTENT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT CLAIMING" AS A SENATOR AND A BRAZILIAN CITIZEN, I HAVE GREAT INTEREST IN KNOWING THE CONTENT OF THE DOCUMENT SENT BY THE US GOVERNMENT TO THE CONGRESS ABOUT THE INTERNAL SITUATION IN BRAZIL."

8. IN ARENA ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT MARCO MACIEL STRESSED HIS SUPPORT FOR THE GOB DECISION TO REJECT AID, CALLING US ACTION INTERFERENCE IN BRAZILIAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS. ARENA SECRETARY GENERAL DEPUTY NELSON MARCHEZAN AFFIRMED THAT ARENA WOULD DEFEND THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION BUT ADDED HIS DESIRE TO AVOID EMOTIONAL ANTI-AMERICAN CAMPAIGN "BECAUSE WE WILL WIN NOTHING BY THIS." MARCHEZAN ALSO NOTED THAT "BEFORE PRESIDENT CARTER, WE WERE ALREADY PREOCCUPIED WITH HUMAN RIGHTS."

9. CONSIDERABLE PRESS PLAY WAS GIVEN COMMENTS BY VISITING SENATOR CHARLES MATHIAS, WHO TOLD RIO NEWSMEN THAT LATEST EPISODE WILL NOT AFFECT USG/GOB DISCUSSIONS ON NUCLEAR MATTERS, AND SHOULD NOT AFFECT OTHER AREAS OF THE COOPERATIVE BRAZIL/US RELATIONSHIP, ESPECIALLY THE ECONOMIC FIELD. MATHIAS ALSO STATED THAT HUMAN RIGHTS REVIEW PROCESS FOR SECURITY ASSISTANCE IS DICTATED BY US LAW AND APPLIES TO ALL BENEFICIARIES, NOT JUST BRAZIL; THAT US HAS NO INTENTION OF INTERFERING IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF OTHER STATES; AND THAT HUMAN RIGHTS IS A PERMANENT US CONCERN OF LONG STADING, NOT MERELY A REFLECTION OF CARTER ADMINISTRATION VIEWS.
CRIMMINS

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Message Attributes

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